JFS Planning Committee
September 23, 2025 @ 9 a.m.
CCDJFS Community Room

Members Present: Tom Andrews, Rachel Ketterman, Chaney Nezbeth, Roger Sikorszky, Kimberly Steele, Steve Ullom, Marie Williams, James Ford, Pastor Brian Brown, Lori Colian, Mary Ann Kochalko, Tracy Smith

Guests: Courtney Amendola

Meeting Called to Order/ Quorum Established
Chaney welcomed members and called the meeting to order; quorum was established.

Approval of Minutes
There were no additions, subtractions, or corrections. Tom motioned to approve May minutes; Brian seconded. Motion carries.

Adoption of Agenda
There is one correction to the agenda – it was noted that the May minutes are to be adopted rather than the November minutes. There were no other corrections, additions or deletions to the agenda. Marie motioned to adopt agenda; Lori seconded. Agenda adopted.

Introduction of Guests
Courtney Amendola, the Public Assistance Administrator is a regular guest. Lori Colian is the new Executive Director for Columbiana County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board and has replaced Marcy Patton's membership on the JFS Planning Committee.

Reports

a. **Ohio Means Jobs – Mary Ann**

From the beginning of the program year on July 1 to date there has been 1,546 OMJ visits and 1,283 individuals served. Dislocated workers have increased, and reports of job loss are lower than usual. They expect to be serving dislocated workers. OMJ certification process will be recommended to the Executive Committee of the Workforce Development Board next month. Still waiting to see what happens with Continuing Resolution.

b. **CCDJFS TANF Program Reports –Courtney**

SNAP numbers remain consistent, averaging 2.4 million in monthly expenditures. There was a slight decrease in June for SNAP, OWF, and Child Care – which happens when schools are on summer break. Children are home and individuals are not working off their assistance. County population enrolled in Medicaid decreased in June. There was a large increase in Medicaid payments in June due to the large increase in CFC payments. Expansion increased in May, and then decreased in June, contributing factors include waiver passports, and temporary assistance. Applications coming in daily are consistent. Timeliness in June decreased for TANF. SNAP must be above 90% - which continues to be achieved. TANF needs to be above 95% - which was not met in June – could be that the assessment was late or was rescheduled. Medicaid must be above 90% - did not reach 90% in

May but reached it in June. PCSA case management expenditures vary dependent on the needs of the families.

It has been a continued struggle navigating the changes of the Bill Beautiful Bill. There are specific requirements to receive medical, and counties are required to do more with less money. This creates the consequences of benefits closing for families because there is not enough staff to manage the case load. The clients get angry, because they don't understand. During COVID-19 pandemic, benefits were handed to people, now individuals must work off their assistance to receive medical. Population will be redetermined every 6 months instead of annually, which will be difficult to manage. It has not been ruled out yet, but it is approaching.

There are currently 396 applications pending, with 8 being over 180 days. Case bank applications are daily applications, and there 36 renewals since Friday. Public Assistance workers do medical, SNAP, and cash applications – there is not specific staff to work on each. There is only a hand full of staff to navigate requirements and error rates, but additional staff cannot be hired with the lack of funding.

The NET miles were similar to the last quarter – duplicated consumers decreased, and expenditures increased. This is contingent on the distance of the trips. Highest PRC assistance in April was utilities, with May and June being diversion cash.

Adult Protective Services received 39 referrals in April, 36 in May, and 45 in June. The number of investigations increased each month, with 10 in April, 13 in May, and 25 in June. Of all investigations conducted, 42 involved neglect, 25 involved self-neglect, 45 involved exploitation, and 20 involved physical or emotional abuse. Currently, there are 20 open and active cases and a total of 53 guardianships.

The Shoe Program is halted, with no more applications being accepted. There is funding until the 1st of the year, though there's currently 400 applications to be processed that were received within a months' time. The vouchers will be distributed to families until funding is exhausted.

Old Business
None

New Business

a. Review/ Approval of the Biennial PRC Plan

Several changes have been made to the PRC Plan due to reduced funding, making some programs unavailable. There is updated language on page 2 of the plan regarding available funding for PRC services. Both the Ohio Works Incentive Program and the Employment Incentive Program have been removed from pages 2 and 3 of the matrix, as the state is no longer providing funding for these programs. On page 10, the start date for the Shoe Voucher Program has been updated to October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026, or until funds are exhausted. Additionally, the Summer Youth Employment Program has ended and was removed from page 11 of the matrix. The program had a good participation, and participating youth received incentive school supplies and laptops to assist with school.

Brian motioned to adopt Biennial PRC Plan.; Mary Ann seconded. Biennial PRC Plan adopted.

Rachel and Sheila (Business Office Administrator) recently had a fiscal specialist conduct a review and provide feedback on the administration and oversight of TANF funds. The specialist gave only positive feedback but recommended initiating a discussion with the Planning Committee regarding the TANF program and the use of remaining funds. Last year, TANF funds were fully exhausted for the first time, and are currently projected to go over this year. With expected changes to SNAP and Medicaid in the next few years, further discussion on the allocation and administration of TANF funds will be necessary.

The PRC Plan is a vital resource for the community – current expenditures include food assistance, shoe vouchers, utilities, rent support, bedding and clothing purchases, appliance and furniture purchase, and several other areas of assistance. There is consideration of reallocating more funds toward PRC programs, as it makes the biggest impact in the county.

Current contracts are being reviewed based on necessity and community impact. Of the 35 contracts funded through TANF, some are essential – such as Roger's contract, which provides court-ordered services for children in custody, as well as the GLOW and Pathways programs, but others may not be as beneficial. The respite contract with DD was cancelled due to high administrative costs compared to services provided. Overall, the focus remains on being fiscally responsible and ensuring the efficient use of TANF funds.

Over the past two years the ceiling amounts were spent. Adjustments have been made to current contracts to decrease contract by the amount of unspent funds – as they're needed in other places. The group discussed the importance of reviewing funding priorities and looking whether there are duplicate services within TANF-funded programs. These discussions will be imperative in future meetings.

Members' Comments

Brian reported that the Lisbon Nazarene Church continues to operate its clothing shed that is constantly receiving new items. There is a shoe distribution event in early October at the community hall for individuals aged 55 and older. Funding for the event is limited and not income based. Marty Lake is the contact person for that.

Tom announced CAA's annual Trunk or Treat event scheduled for October 16; over 500 families attended last year. The community needs assessment, conducted every three years, has been distributed. Members were asked to complete the survey, and results will be shared once available.

Rodger reported that The Counseling Center's youth program is improving, with new staff hired as youth community providers. The Triple P Parenting and mental health initiatives are underway in Southern Local, the Career Center, and other school programs, as well as in community parenting and education efforts. This marks the third year of the SPEAK program. He also noted that a voter department event is being held in Rogers today, with participation from local employers, two colleges, the hospital in East Liverpool, JFS, OOD, and MCTA, which will present resources for individuals seeking employment.

Roger reported that The Counseling Center's youth program is back in decent shape. They've been able to hire individuals as youth community providers. Tripple P parenting beginning. Mental health. Southern local and career center, in all schools' programs and community parenting and education. 3 year of SPEAK program. Today – vote department hosting in rogers. Employers – two collages – hospital in EL. JFS. OOD. MCTA – will be presenting offering help to people looking for work.

Chaney reported that the GLOW programs went well, the program has been operating for 6 years. The Way Station is in the final phase of purchasing the church, which will be officially open November 1. They've had meetings with the city – to be a part of a building business incubator. The Way Station's PATHWAYS to independence program is getting over hurdle of renting, striving to rent off the way station instead of other spaces. The average cost of a square foot is 9$ – we will charge 2$ per square foot. We will rent to small businesses or individuals doing a variety of things, such as Cooking baking, making jewelry, etc. They can rent of us.

Chaney reported that the GLOW programs have continued to run successfully and have been operating for six years. The Way Station is in the final phase of purchasing the church property and will officially open on November 1. They have also held meetings with the city to participate in a new building business incubator initiative. Chaney shared that The Way Station's PATHWAYS to Independence program is progressing past challenges related to renting, with the goal of leasing space directly from The Way Station rather than external locations. The average cost of rent space is $9 per square foot, but The Way Station will offer space at $2 per square foot to support small businesses and individuals engaged in activities such as cooking, baking, jewelry making, and other small business ideas.

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 a.m.

The next JFS Planning Committee meeting will be held November 25, 2025, at 9 a.m. @ JFS